

# SIEGE OF A WAGON TRAIN.

A Story of a Battle Between Sioux Indians and Bullwhackers in the Early Days of Montana.

From the New York Sun.

This is a true story of a freighting trip and Indian fight that occurred in the far West in 1865. The narrator is a man famous among sportsmen who have visited the region where he lives. It may be added that in the precinct where he lives there were only five gold democrats last week. He was one of them.

"One July morning in 1865," he said, "a freight train of 93 wagons, each drawn by eight yoke of oxen, rolled out of Helena, Mont., to bring up some freight which the steamboats had unloaded on the Missouri at the mouth of Milk river. Fort Benton was really the head of navigation, but the wagon train was very low, and few boats could get over the shallow bars between that point and our destination, 200 miles below.

"I had recently come to Montana and was a green tenderfoot, one of a host of pilgrims lured West by the gold fever. But after prospecting about for a month or two I concluded that I wasn't successful as a miner. One hundred dollars a month for driving eight yoke of oxen seemed a much surer road to wealth than digging a hole in the ground with the chances of finding nothing but bare bedrock at the bottom of it. Thus it happened that I was one of the 93 bullwhackers who drove the straining cattle out of the rocky gulch and over the dusty trail through the sagebrush plain that hot July morning. On the farm at home I had driven oxen to the plough, so this work was not entirely new to me. In a day or two I became quite proficient with my 20-foot whip, and thought I could mark it almost as loudly as the best bullwhacker in the train.

"Next to the 'Diamond R.' this freight train was the largest in the country; it was owned by Holmes & Balch, the former partner, being our wagon boss, or train master. It required a man of rare tact and judgment to handle a lot of the bullwhackers of that day, for no rougher, wilder set of men ever lived. Holmes was such a man. He did not fraternize with his employees, but was kind and considerate, low-voiced and pleasant in his speech, and consequently was well liked by all. Our lead bullwhacker, the man who drove the lead team, was Missouri Joe, said to be the most expert man with a whip in the West. He knew every one of the 1,500 cattle in the train, and could tell to which team it belonged and its place in the line. It was wonderful to see him handle his whip, which was 25 feet long and weighed 25 pounds without the stock. He could hit a four-bit piece nine times out of 10 at 20 feet; with a wide, driving popper on the end of it he could crack it as loud as the report of a small cannon; pointed with silk, it was a terrible weapon. Balch once bet a thousand dollars that Joe could whip a steer to death in 15 minutes. A large steer was turned into a corral, and carefully pointing his whip with silk, and betting \$300 himself on the result, Joe prepared to win the money. Standing in front of the animal at the proper distance, he sent the long lash between its front legs, and back under the belly with a powerful sweep. The slender point of the lash cut open the steer's belly, and its intestines dropped to the ground; in 13 minutes it was dead.

"From Helena to Fort Benton, about 160 miles, we made good time. Arriving at the fort we were not permitted to proceed until an army officer had inspected our outfit, to see that we were fully prepared to fight any hostile Indians we might meet. Each bullwhacker was obliged to carry a revolver, and slung up on the outside of his wagon box, within easy reach, he was obliged to keep a rifle, powder horn and bullet pouch. In those days the country east of Fort Benton, along the Missouri, was infested by Assinaboine and Yanktonais Sioux, and war parties of other surrounding tribes. The military authorities would not allow freight trains of less than 100 men to go down into this country; but we were so near this number, 96 of us including the cook and night herder, and passed inspection so well, that we were told to proceed. The colonel, however, insisted on our taking one of his cannons, a four-pounder, which, heavily loaded with grapeshot, was attached to the rear end of my wagon, the last one in the train. Freighters going into this country were also obliged to hire a guide and scout, whose business it was to see that the train ran into no ambush, and incidentally to keep the outfit supplied with fresh meat. We fortunately secured the services of a man named Revois, an ex-employee of the American Fur company. He not only knew the country thoroughly, but also was married to a Gros Ventre squaw, and had lived with her people so long that he was up to all the tricks of the wily red man. We were all very glad that he was to accompany us, and as it turned out it was well for us he did.

"From Fort Benton to the mouth of Milk river the trail was over the rolling prairie, but wood and water were abundant, and we made good time. Every morning at dawn the night herder brought in the cattle and we yoked up and drove until 10 o'clock, when we turned out and had breakfast. At 12 o'clock we yoked up again and drove until 4 o'clock, when we had dinner; at 5:30 or 6 o'clock we were again on the road, and kept going until dark. In this way, with frequent opportunities to feed and rest, the cattle did not get tired or footsore, and kept in good flesh.

"Nothing occurred on the down trip to hinder us. Day after day we traveled through an interminable herd of buffalo, but saw no Indians. Revois kept us well supplied with various kinds of meat, and we lived high. I used to amuse myself by shooting at the antelope as we traveled along, but never succeeded in hitting one. I often thought I would like to fire the cannon into a band of them, and made up my mind I would do so at the first opportunity.

"When but three or four miles from our destination, the trail turned abruptly to the right in order to cross a washout, and the train made a wide detour to strike the proper place. It was a bad crossing and we halted to give each team ample time. While waiting I happened to look back and saw a band of antelope not a quarter of a mile off. Quickly inserting a fuse, I sighted the cannon at them and pulled the string. It was lucky for me that I stood on one side, for the piece bounded back and went under the wagon as far as the coupling would reach. In a few minutes Holmes

came back and asked me why I had fired him; and with a wink I told him I guessed the old thing must have went off of its own accord. I thought that was the end of it, but in a little while a small squad of United States cavalry came hurrying up from the river, where they were guarding the freight, to see what was the trouble. They found us peacefully driving along the trail, but couldn't learn why or by whom the cannon had been fired, and went back to report. In an hour or so we reached the encampment, and had no sooner unyoked than the officer in charge, a young lieutenant fresh from West Point, sent a couple of soldiers to arrest me. I was taken to the lookout, and brought them up as soon as the battle opened. We told him from which direction the Sioux came when they charged around us every day, and a little while before daylight he went out and placed our allies in the form of an inverted V; at the apex a wide gap was left for the enemy to enter; at the mouth of it was our corral. The Gros Ventres showed considerable skill in concealing themselves on that seemingly bare prairie. When the grass was short they covered themselves with armfuls of it which they plucked; others got into little hollows, or behind a stump of sagebrush, while a few burrowed into the ground like a badger. At sunrise I got up on a wagon and looked carefully for a sign of them, but not one was to be seen.

"No breakfast was cooked that morning; we were too excited to eat, and impatiently waited for the Sioux to appear. About 9 o'clock they came in sight, gracefully riding their prancing ponies, and shouting and singing as usual. We fairly held our breath as we watched them, fearing they would discover the trap laid for them and escape. But on they came, never thinking that they were, many of them, riding straight to their death. Suddenly the Gros Ventres, with yells of joy and hatred, sprang up and closed in behind them, and the two long wings advanced, shooting their guns and arrows as they charged.

"For a moment the Sioux paused, and then, realizing the situation, swept down the ever narrowing lane as fast as they could urge their horses. Already many of them had fallen, and as they came on they began to drop faster and faster. They were so thoroughly surprised and frightened that they did not try to fight, but thought only of escape. We were now to have our chance at them, and as they swept on each side of us we emptied our rifles and revolvers at them, tumbling a number from their saddles and sometimes bringing down both horse and rider with a thud. In a minute they had passed beyond our range, and we rushed out, each one of us anxious to secure a shield or other trophy of the fight. The Gros Ventres were busy scalping the dead and wounded, finishing the job by braining each one with their war clubs to be doubly sure he was a dead Sioux. In a little while their rear guard brought up their ponies and they mounted and rode off on the trail of the fleeing enemy. Whether they overtook and killed any more or not I never knew.

"Breakfast over, a lot of us went out to look for the cattle, which we found contentedly grazing from two to four miles away. By 3 o'clock we were again strung out on the trail. Toward evening our allies began to come in, and we camped early and helped the cooks prepare supper for them. As soon as it was dark they built a

game, is it? Boys, just grab that fellow and tie him up."

"The minute we seized the fellow he gave a loud yell, and the others who were coming up turned around and ran back as fast as they could, and we helped them along with a few rifle shots. The boys were feeling pretty blue over White's awful death, and many were in favor of killing our captive to avenge it; but it seemed to most of us a cowardly thing to do, and we finally compromised the matter by shearing off his flowing locks and letting him go. This was the most insulting thing we could have done to him, and although he never uttered a word or flinched while undergoing the operation, the expression on his face satisfied us that he was suffering as much as if we had killed him by inches.

"About midnight of the fourth day, Revois came in with 300 Gros Ventres; he had found their camp over on the Missouri at Cow Island, and they had been greatly pleased to have a chance of a battle with their old enemies. Revois said they had left their horses about five miles back, in charge of 15 or 20 young men, who would be on the lookout, and bring them up as soon as the battle opened. We told him from which direction the Sioux came when they charged around us every day, and a little while before daylight he went out and placed our allies in the form of an inverted V; at the apex a wide gap was left for the enemy to enter; at the mouth of it was our corral. The Gros Ventres showed considerable skill in concealing themselves on that seemingly bare prairie. When the grass was short they covered themselves with armfuls of it which they plucked; others got into little hollows, or behind a stump of sagebrush, while a few burrowed into the ground like a badger. At sunrise I got up on a wagon and looked carefully for a sign of them, but not one was to be seen.

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countable for any shortage in the freight in his wagon.

"Nothing is so unpardonable to an Indian as to strike him, and we realized that if they chose to resent the insult we would be in serious trouble. Holmes told Revois to inform the Gros Ventres chief that the drunken ruffian who had insulted him would be given up if they wanted him, and they could do what they pleased with him. In this we all agreed; we not only felt that a party who had done so much for us should receive such a return for their kindness, but were also exasperated with the drunken ruffian who had insulted them and thereby imperiled our lives. Everyone said that he deserved any punishment the Gros Ventres would choose to inflict. While we were discussing the matter Wright ran out of the corral and disappeared in the darkness, calling out as he went:

"Holmes, I'll get even with you for this."

"Revois finally pacified the Indians, but they did not dance any more that night. They kept company with us for three days and then left for their camp on the Missouri, happy in the possession of over a hundred pounds of tobacco and a lot of powder and balls which Holmes had distributed among them.

"In due time we reached Fort Benton, and as soon as we camped some of Holmes' friends came over to the corral and told him that Wright was there and had sworn he would kill him on sight. Holmes laughed and said he wasn't afraid of him, and just then someone called out that he was coming. When about a hundred yards from us he drew his revolver, and then Holmes drew his and walked out toward him. They began firing at each other almost immediately, and by the time they had emptied their pistols they were face to face, and simultaneously attempted to use their knives; but both were mortally wounded and, falling down in the grass, expired before we could reach them. Then there was not a man of us but blamed himself for not taking his rifle and shooting the desperado when he first came in sight; but it was too late then to say what we should or could have done, and after burying Holmes, than whom a braver and kinder man never lived, we started on for Helena under the leadership of Missouri Joe.

"Such was the life of a bullwhacker in 1865."

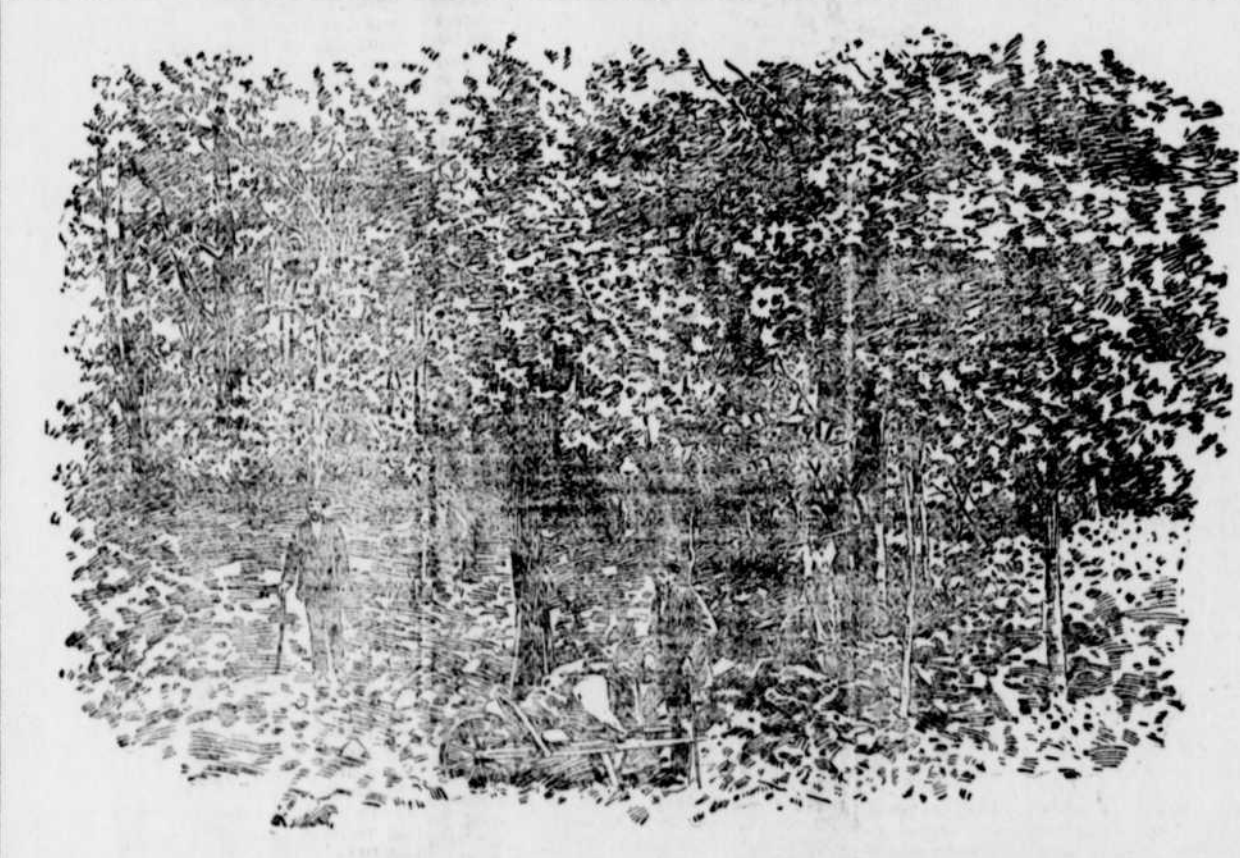
## ONE MINUTE MADE HIM RICH.

An Indiana Farmer Discovers Gold in a Haystack Field.

There is a moment in the life of William H. Bryant of Bedford, Ind., which vividly recalls the startling incidents of the mining excitement of '49. In that moment he was made to realize that his half-hundred sterile acres, on which he had tried in vain to raise a reasonable crop of grain, was not an ordinary farm, but a bed of gold.

Mr. Bryant's farm is just at the outskirts of the tiny hamlet of Bryantville, which is ten miles southwest of Bedford. About half the farm is made up of rocky ledges, with great boulders that appear to have remained undisturbed for ages. Farmer Bryant, who has for many years worked early and late to get his stony fields under cultivation, often noticed the flashes of light which came from the boulders in the middle of the day when the rays of the sun fell upon them; but although he often wondered at this, it was not until recently that he determined to make a careful investigation to ascertain the cause. Then he found running through the rocks a series of streaks of a peculiar formation; in all the rock which covered the greater extent of his farm, these metallic streaks were discernible. A week's labor and study convinced him that the veins contained copper, and in this belief the farmer loaded his wagon with the peculiar stones and drove off to Bedford.

The foundrymen, however, were convinced at the first glance that there was not even a suggestion of copper in the ore. Not at all satisfied with this opin-



SURFACE MINING AT NEWLY DISCOVERED GOLD MINE NEAR BRYANTVILLE, INDIANA.

huge fire in the center of the corral and had a scalp dance. We all sat around, looking on, and not a few of us were rather uneasy, especially those like myself, unused to Indians and their ways. As they danced by us they would swing their war clubs over our heads, or point their guns and arrows at our breasts. Suppose they should attack us, I thought, what show would we have against 300 armed Indians? Revois, however, assured us that they had been seen Dan Wright do it. This Wright was a bad man. He had been driven out of Virginia City by the vigilantes and Holmes had hired him because he could get no one else at the time we were leaving Helena. Wright's wagon was loaded with high wines, and several times on the road he had acted as if partly drunk. On Holmes noticed him and reprimanded him pretty sharply, telling him, too, that he would be held strictly ac-

tion, Mr. Bryant decided to see a local mineralogist.

Into the office of this specialist the farmer walked with undecided step, feeling half-hearted after his reception at the foundry. He presented a chunk of the rock. "What is this, anyway?" he asked.

"Gold," exclaimed the mineralogist. The minute that followed this announcement was the most eventful one in the life of Mr. Bryant. As he explained afterwards, he knew from the manner in which the one word "gold" was uttered that the speaker meant it.

"Yes, it's gold," he repeated, as Mr. Bryant grasped his arm, unable to speak. "Where did it come from?"

But Mr. Bryant was in no mood for explanations. He asked if there were not some regular test that could be made that would determine beyond doubt the presence of gold. He was told that there was, and the regular tests followed. In an hour Mr. Bryant knew the result—that there was gold in the stone, and that his mine of the precious metal.

So Mr. Bryant, who had gone into the little office a poor man, walked out a mine owner. It was quite natural that Bryant should desire to keep his treasure a secret, so there few beyond his immediate family who knew of its existence.

Experts, however, were taken to see the deposit. They found that the rocky tract of many acres was veined with quartz which, it has been estimated, will yield

at least \$50 of gold to the ton. Whether beneath the surface there are still richer deposits has not yet been determined and cannot be until a shaft is sunk.

In the short time which has followed since the finding of the gold, the whole course of Mr. Bryant's life has been changed, and the more fertile parts of the farm, which before were so carefully looked after, are now neglected in favor of the rocks which were formerly such an eyesore.

Although mining, in the full sense of the term, has not yet been begun, and must wait until the arrival of expensive and complicated machinery, the work of making Mr. Bryant a Monte Christo has already commenced; for what may be called surface mining is being done in the way of collecting all the loose quartz that is scattered about.

## Two Texas Colonels.

From the New York Journal.

"Yes, sah, that's me, sah, Percy Hardy, Kunnel Percy Hardy when I'm at home in Texas, sah. An' this puss-an yeh is Kunnel Jim Scott, also of Texas, sah. Shelbyville, Texas—down when the long-horned cattle come from, sah. We all had jes' sol' o'wah steers an' wah a seeln' what so'wah pauce you all had yeh."

Thus spake a tall, dignified-looking man in a slouch hat and a Prince Albert coat, when the policeman on the bridge of the Center street court called the names of "James Scott and Percy Hardy" yesterday morning. The man introduced as "Colonel Jim Scott" was as short and round as his companion was tall and lank.

"Well Colonel Hardy and Colonel Scott, you are both charged by this officer with being drunk and fighting in the Bowery at a late hour last night," said Magistrate Simms. "What have you to say to the charge?"

"Yo' honah," said Colonel Hardy, straightening up to his full height, "mah friend, Kunnel Scott, was ceh'n'ly a little the worse foh the likah he had in him, but I should have keered foh him like a brothah, sah, an' seen that he didn't git into no trouble whatever, sah. The Kunnel an' myself had left o'wah guns at o'wah hotel, sah, so's it's a self-evident fact that we couldn't have done no fightin' to speak of, sah, no mattah what this yeh pawp officer says."

"The big fellow was hammering the little one when I arrested them," said Detective Coyle, of the Elizabeth street station, "and the little one said that he would lodge a complaint against him."

"An' I'm prepared to do so, sah!" said Colonel Scott, speaking for the first time. "That man is mah friend, Judge, an' I come up yeh from Texas along with him. But I want to say right yeh, sah, that Kunnel Percy Hardy has been a-persecutin' me for 20 years, sah!"

"Persecuting you for 20 years?" queried the court, gently.

"Yes, sah, foh all that time, sah. We have always been friends, but he has always bothered me, sah, one way an' another."

"In what way?" asked the magistrate, while Colonel Hardy stared at Colonel Scott in open-mouthed astonishment.

"In various ways, sah. One time he got up a lynchin' down in Texas an' he nevah said nothin' about it to me, sah, his best friend, till it was all ovah. He assaulted me in the streets of Galveston one night, right aftah Gov'nah Culberson's election, two years ago, an' now he's assaulted me again, sah, yeh in a strange city, jes' when we all was takin' a drink ovah the good news that Texas was still democratic."

"I had to hit him, yo' honah," put in Colonel Hardy. "He was makin' a confounded ass of himself an' disgrace'in' o'wah common state, sah; but about that lynchin', sah, it wasn't my lynchin', an' I did stant a boy on a mule aftah him as soon as it looked as if the lynchin' was comin' off."

"Three dollars for the assault," said

## WHEN PAWPAWS ARE RIPE.

The Golden Fruit as Found in an Indiana Thicket.

From the Independent.

An alluvial soil, coated with a deep leaf mould and somewhat silicious, is what the tree chooses to grow in; and it likes to be overshadowed. I find the best fruit maturing in thick woods of plane, tulip and maple on the flatlands close to brook sides. There is a damp, rich, musty smell by which, in the twilight of such a forest, you may distinguish the atmosphere dear to the pawpaw. Here the woodthrush, the mouse of crepuscular groves, flutes a mellow strain at intervals, and all around chatter ground squirrels and nutatches. On the hillside near the cypridipedium, in its season, flaunts its rose-purple reticule. There, too, the black hawk, with its plumage ripens its flat, shining berries of licorice candy.

Get out your bicycle for a six-mile spin into the Sugar Creek hills. We will take the Balhinch road and pedal diligently toward the Llewellyn neighborhood, just this side of which is a wood lot of where clumps of asimina triloba dance down a gentle slope bordering the brook called Indian creek, a few miles from its mouth in Sugar. And what a breeze to whirl through and what a road of packed gravel to fly upon! Over the black fields on either hand the autumn wheat is making a thin wash of green, and the Indian corn stands in conical shocks primly ranged. Many-colored cattle wade knee deep in the third growth of clover, while flocks of sheep snip the blue grass.

Yonder is the wood. A high barbed wire fence girds it in, with not an outside gate to let us through. Well, hang up the wheels in this wayside copse and I'll show you how to beat the barbs. Take off your coat, so hang it across the top wire beside the post, so; and now shin up the post and scramble over where the coat covers the points. It is a trifle tricky, but fairly good. Behold the sign against which we set our sinful nature. "No trespassing on this farm." It is lettered on a board conspicuously nailed to a tree. Stolen fruit may be sweet, but I suggest that we go to you man at work beside a straw rack and negotiate with him.

Now we are light-hearted. We may take all we want and welcome. Like two schoolboys, away we scamper, and what a downfall of odorous fruit we find. Long, banana-like, brown and yellow, the heavy custard apples almost cover the ground in some places, while a few crowded clusters still hang on the boughs. First we eat our fill; then we cram our haversacks full of the choicest specimens. All the way back home we are fragrant and happy. We have realized our autumn dream.

I may be crude of taste and somewhat savage—think what you will—yet the smack of a pawpaw goes through me with a multiform thrill. It is sweet with all the sweets of past days and years of lingerings and anancies. Yesterday a strong woodcock lock wing near my toe in a wild custard grove, and I had neither bow nor gun; but, munching my savage fruit, I recalled in one second each cozy crinkle that I ever shot over from Canada to Florida. The want of a bow cord, the lack of the gun, the camp fires, and the savory broilings; they rushed into my brain and went tingling from heart center to outmost extremities—all on account of a pawpaw and a flushed woodcock hundred feet away.

There is a mingling of a hundred fin, sweets that run through the juice of this rank apple, and it goes well with spitted, dark-fleshed game. What a manifold sauce it is for a luncheon on a mossy log beside a spring ahead! Three spitted doves of the latest summer-hatching and an overripe pawpaw—there is a feast for the Pan of the West!

But year by year this golden ambrosial fruit is disappearing. The farmer's axe whacks down all the sturdy clumps, and no man plants seeds for future orchards. From Indiana to Georgia how few of the once flourishing pawpaw thickets are left for the poet and the virile man of the woods to lounge in while feasting on the savage rolls of custard!

## How's This.

We offer One Hundred Dollars Reward for any case of Catarrh that cannot be cured by Hall's Catarrh Cure.

F. J. CHENEY & CO., Props., Toledo, O. We, the undersigned, have known F. J. Cheney for the last 15 years, and believe him perfectly honorable in all business transactions and financially able to carry out any obligation made by them.

West & Trux. Wholesale Druggists, Toledo, O.

Walding, Kinnam & Martin, Wholesale Druggists, Toledo, O.

Hall's Catarrh Cure is taken internally, acting directly upon the blood and mucous surfaces of the system. Price 75c per bottle. Sold by all druggists. Testimonials free.

Hall's Family Pills are the best.

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## ONE HONEST MAN

Dear Editor: Please inform your readers that if written to confidentially I will mail in a sealed letter the plan pursued by which I was personally rescued from death and many years of suffering from Nervous Weakness, Brightness, and other ailments.

I have no scheme to extort money from any one. I was robbed and enslaved by quacks until I nearly lost faith in mankind, but I have now, I am now well, vigorous and strong, and anxious to make this certain fact known to all. Being nothing to sell or send C. O. D. I want no money. Address, JAMES A. HARRIS, Box 523, Detroit, Mich.

## GOLD OR SILVER

ores can be crushed more economically by our

patented **STEAM STAMP** than

by any other method. **DO YOU KNOW** that in

crucial operation, transportation, and repair, time spent in installing, **WE CAN SAVE YOU**

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